



Operation RIO Update

A soldier guards the
Northern Office July 4
celebration.

17 July 2003

An update for all SWD employees and Operation RIO volunteers supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Mission Update: - by Donald Dunn. We are now quietly exporting oil out of the south on an almost continuous basis and expect to see production increase in the very near future. We reached the one-million-barrels-per-day production level for the first time this week. Unfortunately, because of electrical power disruptions, that rate will be drastically reduced. As far as process, we have successfully set up PMBP, trained PMs with no previous PM experience, and conducted weekly PRBs. We have moved into much improved office space, and our living arrangements are more than adequate. Now entering yet another phase, RIO will reorganize accordingly, as soon my replacement arrives. RIO Rear has been requested to have the next DPM at CRC by 3 Aug. Roles and responsibilities will change as the organization changes. The successfully established PMBP has smoothed out other sub-business processes and significantly increased the boss's comfort level. And, we have executed the mission!

Postcard from Iraq. Mike Jaso – Ft. Worth District



"You work long hours here and it often gets very stressful. It can wear on your morale. But when I first got a chance to get away from the office and actually go into Iraq, it began to remind me of parts of Mexico. My heart went out to those kids. The people, when you see them out there and the way they live, it's difficult. Hopefully in the long run, when we get our job done, the money will start coming in to get these people back on their feet. I just hope what we're doing gets finished so these kids do get help. That will be more rewarding than anything that I was a part of--something that helped get a country back on its feet."

-Mike Jaso, support specialist for Fort Worth District who served April 13- July 3rd in Kuwait as the battle captain for Task Force RIO (Restore Iraqi Oil)

Post Deployment Medical Checkup Requirements: by Madeline Morgan

Returning employees need to fill out DD 2796 within 5 days of returning to their home station and document any potential exposures, health events or individual concerns related to their deployment. This should then be reviewed by Medical personnel, preferably an Occupational Health Doctor. If the Medical personnel determine the need for further action, then the employee would be sent for additional medical review. This should all be paid for by the FEST M money. DD Form 2796 and any exposures or health concerns documented need to be placed in the employee's medical files. The employee will need a TB test immediately upon return and it is recommended they get another within the next 3-12 months.

Counseling for the returning employees should be made available through the Employees Assistance Program (EAP). This would allow for 4 visits and if at that time the EAP counselor determines that the employee needs additional visits, then we should have an additional contract to allow for such visits. If the employee decides to seek out counseling other than that made available by the EAP, then they would need to use their personal insurance.

For employees returning through Ft. Bliss, the CRC is conducting the medical screening process and TB test. There will still need to be a follow up TB test within 3-12 months. A copy of the DD Form 2796 will still need to be placed in the employee's medical file.

Employees need to complete the final Hepatitis A & B shots if they did not do so when they returned. These should also be paid for out of the FEST M funds. If the employees were taking the Anti-Malaria medication while in country, they will need to get primaquine once they return. This will have to be coordinated thru an installation since it is difficult to get the primaquine otherwise.

For more details see: <http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cehr/Deployment/Demob/medreview.htm>



A view from down range: Ed Mason arrived in Kuwait as part of the Task Force Restore Iraqi Oil (RIO) Advance Echelon (ADVON) team. The ADVON team, consisting of 16 members both military and civilian, arrived on Feb. 18, 2003 at Camp Doha with a secret mission and a difficult and challenging future, according to Mason.

In his own words, here is Mason's perspective on those earliest RIO days.

"The original team had 16 people. We went through CRC together at Ft. Benning. Now only three of us are left, Lt. Col. (Mike) Flynn, and

Capt. (John) Conner and me. Tom Armstrong was originally part of the team, but had to leave due to a detached retina. Then he was able to come back.

"When we got here, there was nothing for us—zero. We went to building nine, bay 18 and it was just four walls. We had five laptops with us. That's all we had, and we could only get one to work and that was Lt. Col. Plumley's.

"We were from SWD (Southwestern Division) with no real mission that we could talk about and many of us were civilians on a military base. Anything we needed, people asked us why and we had to say—*Sorry, it's classified*. No one that was military wanted to help us, until we were able to finally utter the words—restore Iraqi oil.

"The first few days we couldn't talk to anyone except on three AT&T cell phones. None of our FEST (Forward Engineer Support Team) kits were here. They contained what we needed, laptops, commo (communication) gear, VTC (video teleconferencing) equipment, plotters, printers, digging tools, environmental equipment, and even car batteries for electricity. FEST A should have been here—it would have had anything you need for a disaster, and war is like a disaster. The kit finally got there two and a half weeks after we arrived.

"After we had been here for four or five days, someone figured out we were attached to CFLCC (Coalition Forces Land Component Command) and that comes with good things—we were able to get land lines in one day from the signal group. All they had to do is flip a switch. Being attached to CFLCC made a real difference--all of a sudden we became an organization with a classified mission and were put on priority!

"Our work area was 30 feet by 22 feet. When the General (Brig. Gen. Robert Crear) came, his office reduced the 30 feet portion. There was no air (conditioning), just large gaping holes. The first bad sand storm had winds of 80 to 100 miles per hour. Tom Miller (SWL) stayed all night in the office the night of the storm and it was so bad he wore a gas mask just to breathe.

The next morning everything was covered with sand and dust. It took hours to clean up and then three days later another storm came and undid everything we cleaned up.

"People were working 16 to 22 hours a day. They worked double days and we had no sleep. There were 16 people in this little confined space. We bickered and fought, but we were still a unit. Nobody could push us around. We were a unit and everybody stood up for everyone else.

"We didn't have time to think. We worked minute-by-minute—hour-by-hour—day-by-day just doing the job that was in front of us. We had very few resources and sometimes for every step forward we took three backwards.

"Your gas mask became part of your body. Everywhere you went it was with you. Frank McStay (SWDO) really got involved with the gas masks and chemical gear. He got involved when someone stole his mask and he had to buy a new one. When we checked our masks, we found that some of them didn't work. Frank helped us figure that out and also helped us get the latest and greatest MOPP (Mission-Oriented Protective Posture) gear. Frank did a lot of things. He was one of the folks that went out to see that the oil wells were shut down right.

"Why did I come? I did it to do something for the country. They needed my specialty. My job was to see that we had communications with the rear. We had to communicate on a secret level. We really needed the VTC. It would have solved everything, but it wasn't here.

"Yes, we did a lot of complaining, but we were in the field, and we had to do the job with what we had and we had to make changes hourly. Would I do this again? Yes, but I'd like it to be different. When I go home, I'm going to stay completely away from the telephone and anything that has anything to do with work. I'd like to find snow and bury my head in it."

Northern Project Office July 4 Celebration: The Northern Project Office celebrated July 4 with a picnic at the Northern Oil Company Country Club in Kirkuk, Iraq. Originally built by the British, the facility has held up well. Team members, to include the Corps, KBR, and members of the Northern Oil Company, were treated to a picnic that was an opportunity to get together in a relaxed atmosphere conducive to team building. Security was provided by the soldiers of the 101st, who also took turns enjoying the facility. Army Corps of Engineer photos by Nola Conway.



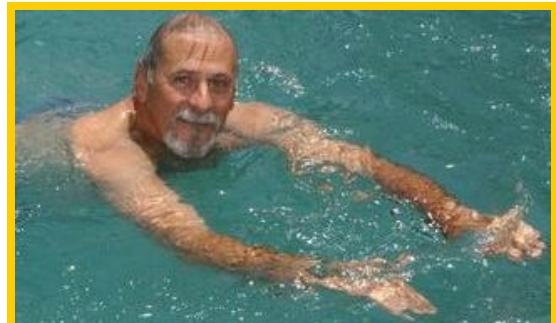
Project Engineer Lewis Herring (SWF), unidentified NOC employee, and Northern Area Project Manager Doug Cox (SWF) enjoy items from the grill.



Mike Smith (HNC), SSG Bonnie Smith and Tom Baska (HNC) enjoy lunch.



Pam Sisler (SWF) teaches Iraqi workers to bake an apple pie.



Mike Farinech, QA inspector (SWF), enjoys the pool.



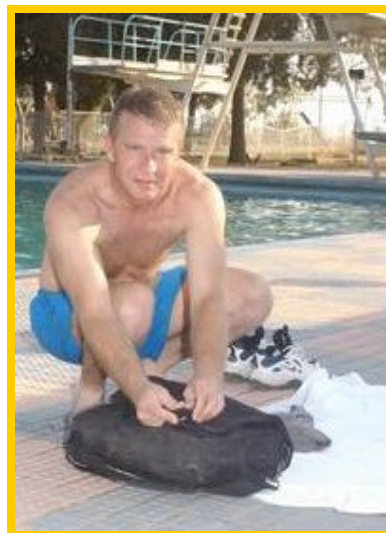
Major Joe Hanus (SWG) helps with kitchen duty.

At right, Captain John Conner (SWT), Operations Officer, works the grill, the coolest place to be.



Richard Bingham (SWF), environmental specialist, finds a quiet place to write letters home.

At right, Ed West (SWT), Information Management, packs up his gear after a swim.



"HOOAH!!"

*MICHAEL L. SCHULTZ, COLONEL, EN
Acting Commander,
Southwestern Division*